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PUBLIC HEALTH WEEKLY UPDATE:
COVID-19
May 21, 2021

Below is a summary related to the Town of Belmont's response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. The Town of Belmont is committed to providing information including this weekly update on the COVID-19 situation. Numbers related to COVID-19 and other pertinent information are updated regularly on the [Town's website](#).

The Town of Belmont currently has 1140 *cumulative* confirmed cases of COVID-19, which is an increase of 2 cases since our May 14 report. There have been a total of 80 COVID-19 related deaths to date for the Town of Belmont, all of which are confirmed by filed death certificates with the Town Clerk's Office. Due to the new case count over the past two weeks, our average daily incidence of 2.6/100k, and our 0.43 percent positivity, Belmont is now **Grey** this week according to the color designation metrics (*Less than or equal to 10 cases overall, as reported in the last two weeks*).

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) continues to provide weekly reports of COVID-19 data by city or town as part of its [Dashboard for COVID-19 Cases, Quarantine and Monitoring](#). MDPH updates this list once a week on Thursdays.

Belmont Town-Level COVID-19 Dashboard

Find the Dashboard at the top of the town COVID-19 Page: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/home/urgent-alerts/covid-19-information-for-the-town-of-belmont-find-all-updates-here>

Belmont Public Schools COVID-19 Dashboard

Find the Dashboard at the top of the town COVID-19 Page: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/home/urgent-alerts/covid-19-information-for-the-town-of-belmont-find-all-updates-here>

Weekly Vaccine Data

<i>As of 5/20/2021</i>	Fully Vaccinated Individuals Count (% of population)
Belmont	14,995 (54.7%)
Middlesex County	815,224 (50%)
Massachusetts	3,330,308 (47.8%)

Link to full vaccination reports and data:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>



New Reopening Updates

On Monday, May 17th Governor Baker announced changes to the Massachusetts reopening plan, in line with the CDC's new mask update and information for fully vaccinated individuals. The Commonwealth is on track to meet the goal of vaccinating 4.1 million residents by the first week of June and thus almost all remaining COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted May 29.

Face Coverings

The Commonwealth's face covering order will be rescinded on **May 29**. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health will issue a new face covering advisory consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's updated guidance. Face coverings will still be mandatory for all individuals on public and private transportation systems (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations), in K-12 schools and child care settings, in healthcare facilities, and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings (Full guidance found [here](#)).

Under the new face covering advisory (Found [here](#)):

- Fully vaccinated individuals may resume regular activities without the requirement of social distancing or wearing a mask
- **Unvaccinated, or partially vaccinated individuals are still strongly advised to wear face coverings**, maintain social distance from others, get tested if exposed, and avoid large crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces

Updated Reopening Timeline

- As of **May 18**
 - Youth and amateur sports guidance no longer requires face coverings for athletes 18 and under while playing outdoor sports
 - DESE guidance no longer requires those in school settings to wear masks for outdoor activities including recess, physical education, youth sports and outdoor learning environments, even if distance cannot be maintained
 - Adults in school settings must continue to wear masks outside when distance cannot be maintained, and both students and adults must continue to wear masks indoors
- Effective **May 29th**
 - All industries will be permitted to open, and increase capacity to 100%
 - All industry COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted, aside from the remaining face covering requirements, and the K-12 and early education guidance
 - Gathering limits will be rescinded
 - All industries are still encouraged to follow CDC guidance for cleaning and hygiene protocols at that time
 - This replaces the previous May 29th and August 1st guidance for reopening dates
 - Until May 29th, all current reopening guidance must continue to be followed – for a reminder about what that is, see the May 10th reopening information and the latest face covering information below

Reopening As of Monday, May 10th:

- Large venues such as indoor and outdoor stadiums, arenas and ballparks have been permitted to increase capacity to 25%.
- Amusement parks, theme parks and outdoor water parks are permitted to operate at a 50% capacity after submitting safety plans to the Department of Public Health.



- Road races and other large, outdoor organized amateur or professional group athletic events are permitted to take place with staggered starts after submitting safety plans to a local board of health or the DPH.
- Youth and adult amateur sports tournaments are allowed for moderate and high risk sports.
- Singing is permitted indoors with strict distancing requirements at performance venues, restaurants, event venues and other businesses.

Detailed information on the updated standards can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/executive-office-of-energy-and-environmental-affairs-eea-covid-19-guidance-documents>

Face Coverings Order Until May 29:

As of April 30th, the Face Coverings Order for the general public has been relaxed for some outdoor settings. Face coverings are only required outside in public when it is not possible to socially distance, and at other times required by sector-specific guidance. Face coverings are still required at all times in indoor public places. **Face coverings will also continue to be required at all times at events, whether held indoors or outdoors and whether held in a public space or private home**, except for when eating or drinking. At smaller gatherings in private homes, face coverings are recommended but not required. This guidance remains in place until May 29th.

For more information, visit mass.gov/reopening.

Vaccines for Ages 12-15

This week, The FDA granted Emergency Use Authorization to Pfizer to allow use of the COVID-19 vaccine on individuals between 12 and 15 years old. The CDC's advisory committee on immunization practices (ACIP) supported this decision, and now this younger population is eligible to get the Pfizer vaccine in Massachusetts. This population can begin making appointments or seeking walk-in vaccines as of May 13th, with consent forms signed by a legal parent or guardian. The parent or guardian is not required to be present at the vaccination appointment, but the minor must bring the signed form. For more information on vaccines for this population, and the link to the consent form, visit this page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccinations-for-people-under-age-18>

Regional Vaccine Collaborative

While Belmont is not currently being supplied with COVID-19 vaccine, there are other local options for residents still looking for an appointment, who might not want to go to a mass vaccination site. A new regional collaborative has been launched between nine communities, Cambridge Health Alliance, and Tufts, which is available to all residents. This collaborative has a vaccination site in Medford, which will be operating Wednesdays and Thursdays between 11 am and 4 pm for the next several weeks as there remains demand. This site receives shipments of Pfizer vaccine, so anyone 12 and older can utilize this location. This is a great resource for students who may not have gotten the vaccine yet, and those who are interested can visit the link below to set up an appointment.

<https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/metronorth>

Finding a COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment

As of May 13th, all residents 12+ are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Residents can preregister to book an appointment at a mass vaccination site at mass.gov/COVIDVaccine. Appointments will be offered based on eligibility and available appointments nearby. It is expected that more sites will come online.



To accommodate residents who are unable to use the form, the preregistration form allows family members, caregivers or other companions to fill out the form on behalf of someone else. Residents who do not have internet access or someone to fill the form out for them can call 2-1-1 to preregister.

A complete list of vaccine locations, including retail pharmacies, health care providers, and other can be found here: <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> or by searching via map here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations#map-of-vaccination-sites->

**Tips for Return to In Person School:
Safe Drop Off and Pick Up**

- Walk your kids to school when possible - The weather continues to get warmer 
- Send them on the bus - They will be masked, distanced, and the windows will be open





- If Driving
 - Watch for pedestrians
 - Follow traffic patterns
 - Obey Crossing Guards
 - Consider parking a block or two away and walking from there

**Belmont Health Department**
617-993-2720

Mask Reminders

Here are some tips about how to properly wear your face coverings, and what type of face coverings are recommended. As a reminder, face coverings are required when you are outside of your home in public and cannot social distance.

CDC Mask Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

BELMONT IS HOME TO THE



**MASKED
MARAUDERS**

Double Masking

As new variants of COVID-19 have emerged, there is evidence that these variants can transmit more easily between people. In order to combat this, doubling up on mask layers may increase your protection from COVID-19 transmission, especially within more crowded indoor spaces. This can be done using multilayer masks with filters, or layering a cloth mask over a surgical mask.

CDC Info on mask improvements: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7007e1.htm>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html>

Gathering Limits

Gathering limits for event venues and in public settings is set at 100 people indoors and 150 people outdoors. Outdoor gatherings at private residences and in private backyards remain at a maximum of 25 people, with indoor house gatherings remaining at 10 people. This will remain the same until the gathering limits are rescinded on May 29th.

Travel Advisory

The Massachusetts Travel Order has been replaced with a Travel Advisory.

All visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, are advised to quarantine for 10 days upon their arrival.

- Travelers are exempt from this advisory if they have a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72 hours prior to their arrival in Massachusetts. If not before entry to Massachusetts, a test may be obtained after arrival, as long as travelers quarantine until a negative test result has been received.
- Anyone who is returning to Massachusetts after an absence of fewer than 24 hours is exempt from this advisory.
- Workers who enter Massachusetts to perform critical infrastructure functions (as [specified by](#) the Federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency) are exempt from this advisory while they are commuting to or from or while at work.
- Travelers who are fully vaccinated (i.e. who have received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR who have received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, 14 days or more ago) and who do not have symptoms are exempt from this advisory.

Travelers are encouraged to consult and follow the CDC's guidelines and requirements for travel:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

Quarantine: Post-Vaccination Guidance

Massachusetts has adopted the CDC changes to the quarantine guidance for individuals who have been fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated is defined as follows: Individuals having received either two doses of Pfizer/Moderna, or the single dose Johnson and Johnson vaccine, who are at least 14 days out from their final dose. For those individuals, both the exposure quarantine guidance and the travel guidance have been updated. If a fully vaccinated individual is exposed to COVID-19/considered a close contact, they are not required to quarantine, as long as they meet the fully vaccinated criteria and are not experiencing any symptoms. In regards to travelling, those who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine or get tested upon their entry/re-entry into Massachusetts, as long as they meet the fully vaccinated criteria and do not experience any symptoms. If a fully vaccinated person does experience symptoms, they should still seek a test and isolate while waiting for their results. This guidance has not changed. This information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

More information on isolation and quarantine can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/tips-to-make-covid-19-isolation-and-quarantine-easier>

COVID-19 Testing – Updates and Tips

Project Beacon Sites

Project Beacon runs appointment-based testing sites throughout the Commonwealth. They specialize in high-volume testing scheduled through an online platform. Each Project Beacon site can test at least 1,000 individuals per day. Some sites are drive through, so be sure to read the instructions for whichever site you choose. More information on Massachusetts testing expansion [Here](#). Sign up for testing through Project Beacon [Here](#).



Should I be tested?

You should get a test for COVID-19 if:

- You develop *any* symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, or
- You are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or
- You have traveled and are returning to MA, or
- You are planning to travel to a state that requires testing prior to arrival

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild, please contact your healthcare provider and a test site near you to schedule a test. You can also [check your symptoms online](#).

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and may include:

- Fever, chills or shaking chills
- Signs of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, lowered oxygen saturation)
- Fatigue, sore throat, headache, body aches/myalgia, or new loss of sense of taste or smell
- Other less common symptoms can include gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g. nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea), rash, and inflammatory conditions such as “COVID toes”.
- In elderly, chronically ill, or debilitated individuals such as residents of a long-term care facility, symptoms of COVID-19 may be subtle such as alterations in mental status or in blood glucose control

Where can I get a test?

Please visit this page to enter your zip code and find a testing site near you: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/find-a-covid-19-test>

You can also download a full list of sites: [MA COVID-19 Testing Sites PDF](#) | [DOC](#)

Information continues to evolve quickly, so we encourage all those looking to be tested to contact the site prior to arrival. Many sites may also require pre-screening, a referral and/or an appointment.

Belmont Food Pantry: May and June Hours

The Belmont Food Pantry will be open to distribute food from 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. on the dates listed. The distribution will still be a drive-thru with everyone remaining in their car, pulling up to the volunteer to check in and another volunteer will put the bag(s), per family, into the car. Walkers PLEASE keep a distance from each other and Food Pantry volunteers WILL COME to you. Belmont residents who are coming to receive food, please remember to bring your ID and have it ready before you get to the check in. Click here for the application and instructions:

<https://sites.google.com/.../thebelmont.../home/new-client-forms>



BELMONT FOOD PANTRY HOURS

The Food Pantry will be **OPEN** on a limited bases for May & June from **8:30-9:30 am** for Belmont residents to receive food or to drop off donations. The pantry will **NOT** be open on any other days.

Saturday May 1st
Saturday May 15th
Saturday June 5th

Donations are only accepted on the above dates –
DO NOT LEAVE FOOD DONATIONS AT THE TOWN HALL DOOR!!

The Belmont Food Pantry will **NOT OPEN** during state snow emergencies; when Belmont Schools are closed, and when there is a heavy storm the Friday night before Saturday opening.

GO TO OUR WEBSITE/FACEBOOK PAGE FOR CONTINUED UPDATES
<https://sites.google.com/site/thebelmontfoodpantry/>
<https://www.facebook.com/BFPantry/>



Belmont Helps: Ways to Help Our Community

[Donate](#) | [Volunteer](#) | [Ask for Help](#) | [Find Resources](#) | [Request or Help Sew Masks](#)

Belmont Helps, a Winn Brook Parent Teacher Association Committee, is a 100% volunteer organization founded on March 14, 2020 to connect Belmont area community members in need during the COVID-19 outbreak to resources and volunteers. More information can be found at www.belmonthelps.org. Contact belmonthelps@gmail.com or leave a message at (617) 993-0162 for a call back from a team member.

COVID-19 Informational Call Center and Email

For general COVID-19 questions, all Massachusetts residents encouraged to call the state's 2-1-1 hotline that is staffed by operators 24/7 and with translators available in multiple languages. Residents with questions can dial 2-1-1 from any landline or cellphone or use the live chat option on the [Mass 2-1-1 website](#).

Please call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency. Calls should not be made to 9-1-1 to obtain information about COVID-19.